

Redefining Orientalism in the Modern World: An Analysis of Classical Examples of
Orientalism in Greek Antiquity and its Evolution in the Modern-day period.

Honors Research Thesis

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation
with *honors research distinction* in Classics in the Undergraduate colleges of
The Ohio State University

By
Eashwar Swamy

The Ohio State University
April 2013

Project Advisor Professor Anna McCullough, Department of Classics

The basis of the paper surrounds Said's definition of orientalism, which essentially draws the distinction between East and West by defining one in terms of the other. "The Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (Said, *Orientalism*, 2). Said goes on to say "the orient is not just adjacent to Europe....it's one of its deepest and most recurring images of the other" (*Orientalism*, 1). Various Greek authors in the classical era helped in forming the framework of orientalism, which later was implemented in Edward Said to define the relationship between East and West. Classical orientalism thus, as it pertains to this paper, is the orientalism which was practiced by classical Greek authors. The first section of the paper will discuss major literary, historical, and dramatic passages from classical antiquity which give examples of what orientalism was framed as in the classical era. This section will also emphasize the clear evolution of the concept of orientalism. In classical antiquity, orientalism was defined within the scope of East vs. West, with distinctions being based on climate, climate's relationship with governance and politics, and political geography.

The second half of the paper will discuss the evolution of the concept of orientalism in the modern-day time period, from the end of the Cold War Era onwards, with specific emphasis placed on U.S. and regional European foreign policy. I will show through various modern-day examples that the concept of orientalism still exists, but the scope, level of distinction between the two "groups" and the parameters of comparison have changed. In the modern-day time period, orientalism has taken on a different meaning, for though there is still an East vs. West mentality, in regards to the "other," the primary "other" as viewed by the West, is Arab Muslims. In terms of the parameters of defining this new orientalist comparison, the primary areas of contrast are sociocultural values, religious identity, and the concept of governance as it relates to religion.

Classical Orientalism: Theories on Environment and Government

In regards to the significance of this paper to issues within the classics discipline, orientalism has been a major idea implemented in some of the most famous works of antiquity. Orientalism, as portrayed in these various texts, has helped to shape the separation between East and West as seen in the eyes of the classical Greek scholars and has helped to shape modern-day thought on the Orient. It is this separation which in turn has been the foundational knowledge to explain the historical relationship between East and West through the lens of Greek scholars and writers. The significance of the discussion on orientalism within the classics discipline is thus twofold; in a more direct way it helped readers understand the prevailing views the Greeks had of the East in classical antiquity as well as their relationship with them, and also helps add a foundation for the discussion of orientalism and its effects in the modern-day period.

In regards to Hippocrates, his central argument concerning the East-West divide as discussed in the text *Airs, Waters, Places* is primarily based on physical characteristics, and their effects on the social, behavioral, health, and political ideas held by each group. As Frank A. Barrett described in his book *Disease and Geography: A History of an Idea*, “Hippocrates embraces the natural science philosophy of Hellenic Greece and in so doing laid the foundation for the idea that the environment, both physical and human, had a bearing on sickness and health” (Barrett, 6). Hippocrates thus used his understanding of the racial differences between the two groups as central ideas which supported his conclusions regarding health and its relationship to environment. Early on in the text Hippocrates makes it very clear to the reader that Asia and Europe are completely different, as well as the races within each area: “I now want to show how different in all respects are Asia and Europe, and why races are dissimilar, showing individual physical characteristics” (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XII).

The first distinction made is between the general differences of each group's people. "Asia differs very much from Europe in the nature of everything that grows there, vegetable or human" (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XII). This initial commentary by Hippocrates is meant to be a very direct message, leaving no doubt in the reader that Hippocrates believes that from the smallest twig to the people themselves, Asia and Europe are inherently different. One difference is that Asia is "a tamer land where the character of the inhabitants is milder and less passionate" (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XII). This description of Asia is meant to portray the Asians as less aggressive and manly, and the idea of the inhabitants being less passionate suggests a weak population who is inherently effeminate and submissive, all of which is in contrast to what classical Greek society viewed as good qualities in a people. This is how Hippocrates begins his environmental outlook on race and its relationship to health. The above description of the people is then explained by Hippocrates as it relates to the climate of the land. Hippocrates admits in his description that not all parts of Asia are the same, and yet he singles out the central region as the primary method of ascribing a certain climate to the region. "The reason for this is the equable blending of the climate, for it lies in the midst of the sunrise facing the dawn. It is thus removed from extremes of heat and cold." (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XII). As mentioned above Hippocrates described the Asian people as having a milder character, and this idea of the mildness of the Asian character is then related to the mildness of the Asian climate. This relationship is made to help further emphasize that the Asians are a mild people in every use of the word, and thus are inferior to Europeans. Continuing with this idea, Hippocrates suggests that it is the lack of extreme weather which "accounts for their mental flabbiness and cowardice as well" (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XII). Here Hippocrates gives his account of the general character of the Asian people, suggesting their distinct climate is what causes their men to be less courageous and mentally strong than the Europeans (Greeks).

Regarding the martial tendencies of the Europeans versus the Asians, Hippocrates suggests that

“they(Asians) are less warlike than Europeans and tamer of spirit, for they are not subject to those physical changes and mental stimulation...they live under unvarying conditions” (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XII). Again Hippocrates cites the climate as the major factor which causes the Asians to differ from the Europeans. Hippocrates views the Asians as less manly due to their less harsh conditions, but he goes so far as to even claim their mental acumen is also hindered by the lack of change in climate.

Hippocrates suggests that “where there are always changes men's minds are roused so they cannot stagnate” (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XVI), as in the case of Europeans, and it is this lack of stimulation and the climate that are the “cause of feebleness in the Asiatic race” (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XVI). This lack of mental stimulation combined with the unvarying conditions suggests that the Asians are a passive people, and thus are more fit to be ruled over. Regarding this concept of passivity, in Marilyn B. Skinner's book *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture* she introduces the topic of sex as being a dominance-submission relationship (Skinner, 7). Within this idea Skinner explains that the male took on the active role, while the female took on the passive status and “being in the submissive role, structural femininity was the consequence of lower status” (Skinner, 7). Skinner's work shows that according to classical Greco-Roman sexual models, femininity was equated with passivity, and similarly masculinity was equated with dominance. Continuing with this line of thought, due to the fact that the Asians are described in a passive way, it can be implied that Asians are also submissive. Skinner goes on to say that in relation to the dominance-submissive relationship, the foreigner is the inferior being (Skinner, 77). This helps to explain the concept of foreign passivity, because it shows that even in the case of sexual acts, the Greeks view the foreigners as the passive, inferior being. This portrayal of the foreigner seems to agree with the description given in Hippocrates' text. Thus, based on climate, Hippocrates suggests that there is a fundamental difference in the strength of the minds and bodies of the Europeans as compared to the Asians.

Hippocrates takes this idea of being strong of body and mind a step further when he relates

these concepts to government and politics, which are the fundamental differences between the Europeans and Asians. Regarding war and its relationship to tyranny vs. freedom, Hippocrates claims that “when men do not govern themselves and are not their own masters, they do not worry so much about warlike exercises as about not appearing warlike....such men lose their high spiritedness through unfamiliarity with war and through sloth, so that even if a man be born brave and of stout heart, his character is ruined by this form of government” (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XVI). Hippocrates' central point regarding governance is simply arguing against the monarchical system of much of Asia. Granted there were Greek city-states as well which were under monarchical rule (i.e. Sparta), but based on the description given by Hippocrates it seems that his primary concern is with those monarchies which were oppressive or tyrannical in their governing of the people. He argues that those who are subjects of a master are required to fight for a master and their master's benefit. Hippocrates goes further to say that the Asians, being under the yoke of another's rule, are required to fight even if they do not wish to, and thus though they appear to be more warlike in order to avoid being punished, nevertheless they are less prone to fighting well. Prowess in battle is a quality which is looked upon highly by the Greeks, thus Hippocrates emphasizes the lack of this quality in the Asians as a means of distinguishing the West from Asia. Hippocrates suggests that the most warlike men are those who “are not subject races but rule themselves and labour on their own behalf” (*Airs, Waters, Places*, XII). This idea follows suit with the ideas described in Skinner's analogy regarding sex, for adult Greek men, as mentioned above, are considered to be superior, dominant force, and thus are not the passive subjects. Herein lies another major argument given by Hippocrates for the reasons that Europe and Asia differ, chiefly that rule of law and the freedom given to most Europeans is what causes them to be superior to the vast majority of Asians when it comes to war, manliness, etc. So it is suggested by the text that the freedom described by Hippocrates is actually the absence of tyranny, and he does not point to a specific form of government which does allow for freedom; rather, he points to Europe and its various examples of free

city-states.

As Barrett put it, “Hippocrates laid the foundation for medical geography as well as geographical medicine, because in establishing the geographical aspects of disease, he also recognized the medical implications of geography” (Barrett, 6). In sum, Hippocrates' work is an early example of Greek thought regarding the East as a separate entity, people, and culture, due to various mental, physical, and behavioral differences cited by Hippocrates, all of which are based on the primary difference of climate.

Another major example of Greek authors displaying thinly veiled orientalism in their texts comes in the form of Herodotus' *The Histories*. According to A.R. Burns' introduction to Herodotus' *The Histories*, the theme of Herodotus' work was “Greece and the East, and especially the causes of their conflict” (*Histories*, 17). Herodotus has been called by “Cicero and others as the ‘Father of Modern History’” (Selincourt, intro), and his work has been influential on later Greek historical work. Herodotus was also a major influence for later Greek writers and orators, in regards to his commentary on the East and Persia, as well as his discussion of Athens as the paradigm democracy. Herodotus is thus the example of Orientalism in which the Persians are centered on as the “other,” and he uses political geography as the basis for this argument. Herodotus begins his text by creating the framework of the two groups giving his reason for writing these records, that “great and marvelous deeds-some displayed by Greeks, some by barbarians-may not be without their glory; and especially to show why the two peoples fought with each other” (*Histories*, 1.1). Thus Herodotus begins his description of the relationship between the Greeks and the Persians by referring to all those that are of the East and non-Greek as barbarians. Herodotus discusses the cause of the schism between East and West, citing the cases of the rape/abduction of Europa and later Helen.

“The Asiatics, according to the Persians, took the seizure of the women lightly enough, but not so the Greeks: the Greeks, merely on account of a girl from Sparta, raised a big army, invaded Asia and

destroyed the empire of Priam. From that root sprang their belief in the perpetual enmity of the Grecian World towards them-because the Persians claim Asia and the barbarian races dwelling in it as their own, Europe and Greek states being, in their opinion, quite separate and distinct from them” (*Histories*, 1.4).

From the initial point of discussion it is evident that Herodotus clearly distinguishes the Greeks from the Persians, and this distinction follows the “us versus them” mentality and builds on this idea to explain the causes of eternal hatred between the two, mainly the warring that occurs between Greece and Persia. These various women who were viewed as possessions, played a role in igniting the warring, but it is the act of invasion of territory which is the primary cause of hatred between Greece and Persia. In this case, the idea of Orientalism is seen in the view of the Persians, who assumed Asia as part of their territory, thereby distinguishing themselves from Europe and Greece solely on the basis of region and geography of their landmass.

Herodotus goes even further to describe the hubris of the Persians and those who are part of their empire. “After their own nation they hold their nearest neighbors most in honor, then the nearest but one- and so on, their disrespect decreasing as the distance grows, and the most remote being the most despised. Themselves they consider in every way to be superior to everyone else in the world” (*Histories*, 1:130-135,97). It is interesting to note this superiority complex of the Persians, for when it comes to the issue of culture, the Persians, unlike the Greeks, lack strong, definitive cultural traditions. In regards to culture, Greeks place a high value on those things which identify them as being culturally Greek. In regards to the concept of cultural nationalism, the Persians however, are viewed as lacking a strong foundation in regards to culture and thus are forced to borrow from other cultures. “No race is so ready to adopt foreign ways as the Persian” (*Histories* I:130-135,97). The idea that the Persians are adopting foreign customs is in itself not a problem, but rather it emphasizes that unlike the Greeks who have a strong cultural tradition, the Persians do not have a cultural tradition which defines them. Thus Herodotus makes the clear distinction between the two cultures and has set the tone for the rest of his

text by creating an orientalist view of the Persians as a culturally foreign, separate entity from the Greeks. Also, being distant from the Persian capital also may have given those outlying nations more reason to resent Persian rule, which was ruling them from afar, and thus those cities may have been more prone to dissent. Herodotus, writing as a Greek author, is clearly in support of the idea that Greeks are superior to all other uncivilized groups, which are viewed as barbarians. This idea that the Persians are only friendly to other regional groups surrounding them is another reason which can be interpreted to suggest that due to the distance which separates the Persians and Greeks, there is tension between the two parties. This issue of regional boundaries is clearly in line with the Herodotus' method of distinguishing the Greeks from the Persians based on political geography, for the Greeks are distant neighbors of the Persians, and it is this physical difference which causes the major differences in each culture.

Herodotus' *The Histories* is one of the earliest examples of the Greeks' depiction of the Persians, and it was this depiction which helped to shape Greek thought on Persia for quite some time. Herodotus depicts the Persians as “the other” due to political geography and its relation to social customs, cultural reasons, and crimes committed between each group (one against the other). As explained in *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*, “the process of self-definition is defining self in relation to other human beings,” and “Herodotus (in his text) is therefore engaged in nothing less than responding to the intense challenge to define self and alien which the experience of that war [the Persian war] creates” (Brill's, 417). Herodotus cites political geography as the primary cause of all of these differences, all of which are used to show that the Persians are inferior to the Greeks. This distinction based on political geography and the different issues within it all help support the orientalist depiction of the Persians in *The Histories*, and thus it is an example of an orientalist text.

Further development of classical orientalism is seen in Aristotle's *Politics*, specifically citing what is later known as the environment determinism theory, which related various environmental

factors (soil, climate, temperature) to the characteristics, behavior and culture of a population. Aristotle thus in effect accepts the previous argument given by Hippocrates of equating a milder climate to milder people, and he goes on to explain how this effects politics and government. Aristotle cited this theory and used it in context of the Greece vs. “the other” discussion to compare the two groups. These ideas were cited as validations of Greeks viewing themselves as a superior people.

“The people of cold countries, generally, and particularly those of Europe, are full of ‘spirit’, but deficient in skill and intelligence; and this is why they continue to remain comparatively free, but attain to no political development and show no capacity for governing others; the peoples of Asia, although endowed with skill and intelligence, are deficient in spirit, and hence are subjected to slavery. Possessing both spirit and intelligence the Greeks are free to govern all other peoples. They possess both spirit and intelligence: the one quality makes them continue free; the other enables them to attain the heights political development and to show a capacity for governing every other people – if only they could once achieve political unity.” (*Politics*, 7:1327)

Thus this is the major argument cited by Aristotle for political rule by the Greeks, as well as Greek superiority as contrasted with other people. Aristotle's argument is very much pro-Greek, and he forms his views on government and politics by theorizing that the Greeks, due to their specific climate, which in turn causes their nature, spirit, and physical/mental characteristics to be superior to those of the Asians, are thus fit to rule over all others. When referring to the “others” Aristotle is referring to the non-Greeks which he deems are barbarians in comparison to the Greeks. Aristotle, building on Hippocrates’ views on climate and its relationship to culture and behavior, further emphasized the positive nature of the Greeks. Aristotle thus shows that Asians are not just inherently servile in nature, but rather they are more willing to be ruled and thus they embrace tyranny.

In regards to governing as well, Aristotle in book III of *Politics* distinguishes between three different types of governing and their perversions which are used by Greeks and non-Greeks, as well as which ones seem to be favored and more efficient. In describing the various forms of government, Aristotle creates a hierarchy between the different forms of governing (Goodman and Talisse, 19-20).

Aristotle even goes so far as to refer to democracy as an imperfect form of government but still the superior form as compared to tyranny, saying, “And we may further remark that a government which is composed of the middle class more nearly approximates to democracy than to oligarchy, and is the safest of the imperfect forms of government” (*Politics*, V,1). Aristotle goes on to discuss the traits attributed to tyrannies, which he views as the worst form of government. “There is another sort of monarchy not uncommon among the barbarians, which nearly resembles tyranny. But this is both legal and hereditary. For barbarians, being more servile in character than Hellenes, and Asiatics than Europeans, do not rebel against a despotic government” (Book III,XIV). This passage explains the separation created by Aristotle between Greeks and non-Greeks in regards to governance and the rule of the people. Aristotle explains that the Greeks are inherently a free, democratic, and superior people, as reflected by their climate. In contrast, the Asians are governed by tyranny, and they are a servile and inherently inferior people, as reflected by their mild climate. The idea of servility as attributed to the Asians is meant to show that they have a natural, inherent inclination to be dominated and thus they have no cause to rebel, for they embrace tyranny as a necessity. Thus by creating this distinction in governance between tyranny and democracy, Aristotle explains how each form of governance leads the general population to act both in daily life and in regard to rebellions. Aristotle also promotes the idea of Greek superiority over non-Greeks which he suggests are more servile in nature. Aristotle goes on to create even more of a distinction between the Greeks and the tyrannies prevalent in non-Greek culture, suggesting that kings are better than tyrants.

“Such royalties have the nature of tyrannies because the people are by nature slaves; but there is no danger of their being overthrown, for they are hereditary and legal. Wherefore also their guards are such as a king and not such as a tyrant would employ, that is to say, they are composed of citizens, whereas the guards of tyrants are mercenaries. For kings rule according to law over voluntary subjects, but tyrants over involuntary; and the one are guarded by their fellow-citizens the others are guarded against them” (*Politics*, III, XIV).

Thus one of the primary arguments against the barbarians and their method of rule is the idea that the Greeks of some city-states voluntarily have a king rule over them, whereas those people being ruled by a tyrant are being ruled involuntarily and thus lack freedom. Freedom is thus one of the primary ideas which Aristotle uses to distinguish Greeks from non-Greek barbarians. As Aristotle puts it, “This tyranny is just that arbitrary power of an individual which is responsible to no one, and governs all alike, whether equals or better, with a view to its own advantage, not to that of its subjects, and therefore against their will. No free man if he can escape from it, will endure such a government” (*Politics*, IV, X). Based on this description of tyranny, freedom under a king can be defined as having free will and rule over your own personal affairs, while willingly being a subject to a [just] king. Freedom can be applied to democracies and monarchies, and it can be defined in the context of Aristotle's argument to be the absence of tyranny. In the book *Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle*, the authors suggest that Aristotle believes that “each regime with the exception of tyranny, is partly just.....only an absolute tyranny in which standards change from day to day according to the tyrant's whim, deserves to be called absolutely unjust; for in an absolute tyranny, there is, in reality, no regime at all” (*Action and Contemplation* 280-281). It is also important to note that according to Aristotle, “Once more, tyrannies, like all other governments, are destroyed from without by some opposite and more powerful form of government. That such a government will have the will to attack them is clear; for the two are opposed in principle; and all men, if they can, do what they will. Democracy is antagonistic to tyranny” (*Politics*, V, X).

Aristotle's *Politics* is thus a primary example of classical orientalism. Aristotle builds upon the Hippocrates' theory of equating a mild climate to a mild people by relating this theory to the personality and governing characteristics of a people. This example draws a clear line of division between East and West based directly on their physical location and environmental factors. This environmental deterministic theory directly categorizes the East (though he admits they do have some

positive qualities) in a more negative light than the Greeks, who, according to Aristotle, possess the best qualities of the West and the East. As Julia Nelson-Hawkins described it, “Greeks combine European spirit with Asiatic intelligence and competence, and avoid the moral and physical pitfalls due to their ideal climate and environment” (Nelson-Hawkins, 2013). Throughout the text, Aristotle, in his discussion and comparison of the various forms of government, separates the inferior tyrannies of the East and the superior democracies and kingships of the West. After creating a distinction in governing style, Aristotle goes so far as to suggest that tyranny is a weaker form of governing as compared to democracy, chiefly due to the concept of freedom of the people. In short, by relating Hippocrates’ climate theory to Aristotle’s own theories on politics and government, Aristotle creates a distinction between the Greeks and Asians.

It is interesting to note, however, that all of the texts refer to the Other, be it the East, the Persians, etc., as barbarians. In Herodotus’ *Histories*, “Greeks vs Barbarians constitutes a polarity in that the two groups are mutually exclusive antithetical (a Barbarian is precisely a not-Greek and vice versa) and are jointly exhaustive” (Brill, 364). Similar examples are seen as references above in the case of Hippocrates and Aristotle. According to Liddell and Scott’s *Greek and English Lexicon*, the term barbarian actually is derived from the Greek word (*barbaros*). The term *barbaros* is defined as behaving or speaking like a barbarian; to speak with a foreign tongue: to ape foreigners. There are common characteristics of barbarians, primarily that they are non-Greek, speak a foreign language, and are clearly foreign to the Greek people. In each of the cases, be it the Persians or the term Asians, the term barbarian is used to define the people of the region in a way which explains them as non-Greek, and thus though there are various ethnic groups within these regions, nevertheless these people are grouped together due to their common foreignness as it relates to the Greeks and their culture. It is this singular fact above any other which truly emphasizes the view that the Greeks were inherently superior, which these Greek writers, playwrights, and philosophers had concerning the Other and their portrayal

in Greek texts.

All three of these authors are examples of classical orientalism. In the case of Herodotus, the text distinguishes between the customs of the Greeks and Persians and cites the “historical” precedence of the animosity between East and West. All of this is used by Herodotus in his discussion of the concept of political geography as it related to the ideas of territory, culture, and sovereignty. Hippocrates and Aristotle, however, focus more on environmental and physical/health factors which distinguish the Greeks from the East and which also are reasons for Greek superiority. Specifically, Hippocrates implements his climate theory to generate orientalist views of the character, geography, and governance of each people. Aristotle builds upon the climate theory to emphasize issues of freedom, governance, and the idea of democracy overcoming tyranny in support of freedom. Aristotle also focuses on different types of government and how freedom is defined within each group. It seems in the case of Hippocrates and Herodotus that freedom was generalized to be the absence of tyranny, whereas Aristotle goes into far more detail regarding the different types of governance. In comparing the various types of government, Aristotle eventually explains the various reasons which make democracy a superior form of government, and thus the Greeks, being strong adherents to the idea of democracy, are a superior people. Through different levels of distinction, from geographical differences, to climate and social characteristics, to politics and government, these classical Greek authors show that the Greeks are superior to the barbarians which are representative of the East. These authors believe that due to the inherent, significant differences between the Greeks and Persians/East, a Persian can never truly be “taught” to be a Greek. As mentioned above in the case of the Persians learning Greek customs, Herodotus makes it clear that the Persians are still a distinct people who have a different culture. In the classical era, geography, environment, and their ramifications for government played a prominent role as the major factors which classical authors used in their orientalizing of the East, whereas in the modern-day time period, the various issues within culture and religion play a more

prominent role as factors in the orientalization of the East.

The second half of the paper will discuss the evolution of the concept of orientalism in the modern-day time period, from the end of the Cold War Era onwards, with specific emphasis placed on U.S. and regional European foreign policy. I will show through various modern-day examples that contrary to the conclusions of some modern scholars, the concept of orientalism still exists, but the scope, points of distinction, and parameters of comparison have changed. In the modern-day time period, orientalism has taken on a different meaning, for though there is still an East vs. West mentality, in regards to the “other,” the primary “other” as viewed by the West, is the Middle East, specifically Arab Muslims. In terms of the parameters of defining this new orientalist comparison, the primary areas of contrast are sociocultural values, religious identity, national identity, and the concept of governance as it relates to religion. It is important to clarify that Orientalism as depicted in the modern time has evolved to be dispersed via mass media, and the role of media in orientalism has been quite large. Regarding orientalists and their ideas, “the published information in the mass media containing generalized, stereotypical, and discriminatory perceptions of the Islamic world that reach the masses of western society originate from these sources” (Kamalipour, 204). Mass media has played a major role in shaping Western thought and perception of the Islamic world, and as a result Islamophobia has taken root as a major issue when discussing the Middle East. The primary thrust of this paper is to examine Islamophobia as it relates to orientalism. An examination of the media's role in the orientalization of the Islamic world will be discussed specifically as it is portrayed in movies/TV, cartoons, scholarly works, and governmental policy.

Islamophobia

The main tenet of modern orientalism is the idea of Islamophobia, which is defined as

“unfounded fear of and hostility towards Islam” (Nimer, 1). Mohamad Nimer in his book, *Islamophobia and Anti-Americanism: Causes and Remedies*, discusses specifically how “anti-Muslim feelings in the United States have intensified, especially after the terrorist attacks on September 11th, 2001 [9/11]” (Nimer, 1). The presence of anti-Muslim feelings emphasizes the way people within Western society have come to view the Middle East through an orientalist perspective. According to a public opinion poll commissioned by CAIR (2005), “between one-fourth and one-third of Americans hold negative views of Islam and Muslims” (Nimer, 1). This data suggests that there is some general anti-Islamic sentiment in the American population. The question that this data forces the reader to ask himself is this: “Why do many in the general populace have negative sentiments towards Islam?” Similar to Zachary Lockman's depiction of the right-wing, Nimer suggests that “Islamophobia stems from misrepresentations, ignorance, lies, and half-truths put out by American extremists on the far right” (Nimer, 21). Based on this description, the far right can be seen as the agent of orientalism in orientaling the Middle East, for it is their misrepresentations which are causing the general populace to view the Middle East in a negative way. By creating this negative, foreign description of the Middle East, the U.S. national identity is reinforced as a force directly opposing Islam. These misrepresentations of the Islamic world are the basis of our discussion of the modern methods which are used to orientalize the Arab world, which in turn are the causes of Islamophobia and anti-Islamic sentiment in the West. Islamophobia is the primary form of orientalism that is present in the modern period and this paper examines the causes, methods, and different sources of Islamophobia.

The rise of terrorism and its connection with radical Islam is arguably one of the most visible and direct causes of Islamophobia. Acts of terrorism connected with radical Islam became more prevalent in the late 1980s. Government officials reacted to these acts by voicing to the American people the idea that “we” (America) had not done anything to cause this eruption of hatred and madness (Lockman, 228). In response to these acts as well, the forces within the government “resorted

to pop psychology and crude cultural stereotypes, resulting in endless articles and television programs purporting to explain the ‘terrorist mindset’ or why Arabs or Muslims embraced a ‘culture of death’” (Lockman, 228). “In the 1990s, the much debated issue of whether Islam or Islamism was a threat to the West or not came to be increasingly bound up with the problem of terrorism” (Lockman, 223). The government became an agent of orientalism by utilizing pop psychology and crude negative images of Arabs and their culture, all in an attempt to differentiate the Arabs/Muslims as terrorists. These terrorist attacks which were deemed to be against the West were thus used as reasoning to show that Islam/Arabs were inferior to the West. The idea of inferiority sprung from the idea that unlike the West, Islam embraced a culture of terrorism which mass media explained as a reason for their rage.

Another major element which helped in promoting the resurgence of orientalism as it pertained to the Middle East and Islam was Israel. Israel, though not physically described as being part of the West, was deemed an ally of the West and was embraced by the Bush administration. One key example of this comes in the book *Terrorism: How the West can Win*, which was edited by current Israeli Prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. The book had various contributing authors, including Bernard Lewis, helping to emphasize the “convergence of the (Jewish and non-Jewish) American right and Israeli right around an anti-Soviet, anti-Palestinian, Anti-Islamic, and antiterrorist agenda” (Lockman, 228). It is also important to note that in this book Netanyahu described the issue of terrorism as being “part of a much bigger struggle, one between the forces of civilization and the forces of barbarism” (Lockman, 228). The distinction made by Netanyahu between civilization and barbarism is meant to be viewed in the light of the Israeli-PLO conflict, which can be seen to be symbolic of the larger West vs. Islam conflict. Netanyahu also refers to the Arabs as barbarians, similar to the way in which the classical Greek authors used the term to distinguish themselves from non-Greeks. Netanyahu thus uses this term to distinguish the civilizations of the West and the PLO. Netanyahu used this term to explain how Western civilization could overcome the agent of terrorism, which in terms of Netanyahu's argument,

can be thought of as Islam. The idea was that Muslims are terrorist, and terrorists were deemed to be barbaric, therefore Muslims are barbaric. It was this message which helped to create anti-Islamic sentiment.

The media played a role in helping to create the negative image of the Arab in the perspective of America through various cartoons, TV shows, and movies as well. One of the most famous examples comes in the form of the children's movie, *Aladdin* (1992). At first glance it might seem that cartoons are simplistic in nature and cannot really be an orientalizing agent. Upon further inspection however, within the story there are some subtle and distinct images used to present an orientalized view of Arab Islam to Western children. "Cartoon images are especially damaging because children absorb most of their cultural values in their early years and television is the primary way they learn about Arabs. Once images of evil Arabs are learned, they are almost impossible to eradicate" (Kamalipour, 124). Thus even from an early age children are exposed to orientalist propaganda which reinforces anti-Arab sentiment within the children as they grow up. Regarding primary examples from the cartoon, the characters' noses come to mind as one of the most obvious examples, with the primary protagonist Aladdin having a straight nose, while the common people and crooks of the film all have crooked noses" (Jaap Van Kinnekan, 25). This relationship is seen in the fact that Aladdin is interpreted as the evolving, progressive, Western hero, while Jaffar, the primary villain, is considered to be the evil Arab (Kamalipour, 217). Also, in regards to the opening song, "Arabian Nights," there is a clear negative cultural portrayal made within one of the stanzas, which referred to "a faraway place with camel caravans "where they cut off your ear if they don't like your face. It's barbaric, but hey, it's home" (*Aladdin*, 1992). This stanza is a subtle method of emphasizing the barbaric nature of Islam as a religion, for it can be interpreted as a negative commentary on Sharia law and the Koranic punishments used within it. The song is a very strong example of orientalism as seen in cartoons, for similarly to ancient Greek authors, the authors of *Aladdin* use the word barbaric to portray the Eastern "other." In

the case of *Aladdin*, this description of the faraway land where there are cruel barbaric people is meant to be in strong opposition to Western theories on culture and actions. Referring to the Arab Muslims as barbaric suggests that they and their culture are uncivilized as compared to the West. It is clear in the case of *Aladdin* that the movie utilized oriental imagery to depict the Middle East as a faraway, barbaric place. “Thus *Aladdin* participates in a series of cliched-often self-contradictory narrative, informing popular American assumptions about the Muslim Middle East, made recognizable through a form of western romance” (*Visions of the East*, 185).

Concerning the media, Nimer suggests that the hate crimes and racism which were prevalent after 9/11 were the result of “stereotypes that are reinforced in media outlets, including Fox News and Sinclair broadcasting” (Nimer, 61). Going deeper into the topic, Nimer discusses the idea that “When the Middle East, Arabs, and Muslims, make it into the news, it is usually in the context of negative (or unfavorable) events” (Nimer, 82). Regarding the various powerful western media conglomerates, it is clear that they “are also conscious that they have the capacity to influence foreign policy” (Kamalipour, 205). Due to this awareness by the media of their influence on culture and policy, mass media has become a major force in the orientalization of Arab Islam. Kamalipour continuing with this theme goes on to say that Western media sources are guilty of oversimplifying the issues concerning Islam, and “the unfortunate result is the assumption made by mass media and much of Western society that most, if not all Muslims are revivalists, or that all revivalists are extremists, terrorists, or militants” (Kamalipour, 207). Kamalipour goes even further to directly point the blame at specific newspapers and magazines. “Those particularly guilty of simplifying data about the Islamic world are the publications dominating mass media: the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, the Christian Science Monitor, and the Washington Post, all of which maintain interests in events and issues that are controversial and ominous for Western society” (Kamalipour, 206). These publications are very visible and prominent sources of news and information in America and because of this they have a strong

influence on the American public's understanding of Islam. “Newspeak from the Western media has too often been one-sided and biased, not allowing for objective interpretations...through the media, much of Western society has come to view Muslims, who are assumed to be extremists, in simple terms: good versus evil, The West versus Islam. This is a bogus generalization” (Kamalipour, 2007). A primary example of this is seen in the case of the *Time*, *the Economist*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. World Report*, which contained recent headlines including America vs. Islam, The Islamic Threat, and Should We Fear Islam among others (Kamalipour, 2007). These headlines show the way in which many of the prominent U.S. newspapers, magazines, and journals, have orientalized Arab Islam by creating an “us vs. them” dynamic between the West and Islam. The headline titles are meant to place the U.S and the West in direct opposition to Islam, thereby suggesting that Islam is a foreign threat to the Western, American way of life. Thus these various publications attempt to use national identity as well as the American cultural association of being part of “the West” to portray Islam in a negative light.

There can be no doubt that Islamophobia also has its roots in popular culture, specifically TV in which the “majority reproduce the standard stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims as terrorists who are fanatically committed to killing innocents” (Nimer, 83). A prime example of this is seen in the hit TV show “24,” specifically in the third season in which the plot was: “An ordinary Muslim family in the United States is, in fact, a sleeper cell. The family orchestrates an elaborate plot to....kill the president and detonate a large nuclear weapon in a large American city” (Nimer, 83). These negative depictions of Arabs as fanatics and terrorists are examples of the way in which the media acted as an agent in orientalizing the Middle East for the purpose of shaping public opinion on Arabs, Islam, and the Middle East. “Negative stereotypes and images of Muslims and Islam are recurring. ‘24’ and other shows go even further, however, suggesting to Americans that the Muslim family next door could be a sleeper cell committed to inflicting mass casualties against its fellow citizens” (Nimer, 84). By making these subtle relationships between Arabs and terrorism, these television shows' creators and writers are

attempting to create an anti-Islamic sentiment, thus promoting Islamophobia, which in turn orientalizes Islam to be viewed as a threat to America.

Scholarly work is another form of purveying orientalism which exerts influence in a different section of the populace than social mass media, specifically targeting academia, policymakers, and government officials. Concerning Islam there were two positions taken up on the issue, the liberal stance which supported the idea that Islam was not wholly violent and anti-democratic, and the hard-line position which viewed Islam as a threat to the West. The hard-line position of these scholars which viewed Islam as a threat, began a successful movement within the area of scholarship to foment anti-Islamic sentiment. “In various books, articles, op-ed pieces, public lecture and media appearances its advocates [of the hard-line position towards Islam] argued through the 1990s that Islamism had replaced communism as the greatest threat facing the West (and Israel), and that only a firm even aggressive stance, including the use of military force could eradicate the threat” (Lockman, 221). This first text alone shows the line of distinction, for Islam is described here as a separate entity from the West. By portraying Islam as being as great a threat as communism was to West, these scholars are suggesting that Islam, like communism, is seeking to destroy some of the main pillars of Western tradition. “The 1970s witnessed the rise of Islamic political ideologies and movements...these developments seemed to manifest the continued-indeed-growing -salience of Islam as a political ideology in the middle east” (Lockman, 172). The argument proposed by neoconservatives was that “Islam was by its very nature autocratic and intolerant. Islamism was totalitarianism and generated terrorism, plain and simple” (Lockman, 221). This depiction of Islam by the neoconservatives was meant to be in sharp contrast to what they viewed the West as, mainly a free, Christian, democratic society.

One of the critically acclaimed scholars, Bernard Lewis, a hardliner neo-conservative, was one of the prominent voices who saw “Islam as a wounded civilization, and that Islamism in all its forms as

a pathology and potential threat to the West. Bernard also theorized that the rage Muslims experienced was the Muslims' "inability to tolerate the domination of infidels over true believers" (Lockman, 217). This concept of the domination of Islam, the "other," by the West is similar to the idea espoused by the classical Greeks who believed the Greeks were superior to the East. Lewis' work among other authors helped to shape public opinion and support for the US military campaign in Kuwait; articles such as these "offered American an accessible and satisfying explanation for why there was so much anger and resentment against the United States among Arabs and Muslims" (Lockman, 218). This idea espoused by Lewis and many other neo-conservative scholars emphasized that the reason for this warring was "not because of anything we in the West might have done or were doing, or even because of how our actions and policies were mistakenly perceived by others....it was due to a profound defect in Islamic civilization" (Lockman, 218). It is clear that Lewis viewed Islam as the "other" to the West. Bernard Lewis went so far in his writings as to depict the Muslim in an orientalized way, as seen in his 1990 article in *The Atlantic Monthly*. The article was written to describe Lewis' theory on the "Roots of Muslim Rage," and the cover, according to Lockman, was "adorned with an illustration of a stereotypically bearded, turbaned, hook-nosed and scowling Muslim, with the bloodshot reflection of an American flag in each eyeball to show how enraged he was at the United States" (Lockman, 216). This depiction of the Muslim is meant to show just how truly different the Islamic civilization is from the West, as well as it is meant to paint Islam in a negative light by suggesting that Muslims are violent and full of rage. By stereotyping the Arab in regard to his clothing and headwear, Lewis is painting the picture of the Arab as a foreign and very different people as compared to the West.

Another adherent to Lewis' neo-conservative views on Islam was Thomas Friedman, a New York Times correspondent and later chief foreign affairs commentator and "something of a media star" (Lockman, 218). Friedman in a 1990 op-ed post in the buildup to the Gulf War "provides a good illustration of how despite all the critiques to which it had been subjected, the kind of cultural

essentialism which critics had argued was central to the Orientalist tradition continued to be pressed into service, especially at moments of crisis” (Lockman, 218). In the op-ed Friedman attempted to simplify the major differences between the West and the Arab world by explaining the relative symbols of each group, the cross and crescent moon. Friedman used these symbols to suggest that “Arabs don't think like we do” (Lockman, 219). The idea of Arabs not thinking like “we” in the West think stems from the idea that Islam is inherently a different religion and way of viewing the world as compared to Christianity and Western thought. This difference is meant to suggest that Islam is a completely separate system which cannot be related to Christianity, and an emphasis is placed on this as a means of portraying Islam in a negative light. It is interesting to note though that though it may seem obvious that this method of comparison can easily be argued as being far too general. Nevertheless, the author of *Contending Visions of the Middle East*, Zachary Lockman, stated, “Friedman's dichotomization of the West and Arab world was no doubt crude and simplistic, even laughable; but at a critical moment it offered Americans an easy way both to make sense of a complicated and often confusing world and to reassure themselves about their innocence, righteousness, and rationality” (Lockman, 219). The symbolic distinction made by Friedman is meant to explain the idea that the two groups were inherently different, thereby emphasizing the distinction between each group.

It is also interesting to note that the theory espoused by Friedman, Lewis and many others, is “sometimes termed ‘neo-Orientalist’ because it recapitulated key elements of orientalism in a contemporary setting” (Lockman, 219). Specifically, these scholars emphasized the elements of government and sociocultural differences. It is important to recognize that this contemporary orientalist depiction of Islam is not the only modern portrayal of Islam, but rather that due to various media, governmental policy, and scholarly influences, this perspective became a prominent method of viewing the Islamic Middle East. Many of these right-wing policies were implemented during the Bush era of the early 2000s, and “though there were certainly voices raised in academia, the think tank world

and elsewhere, in opposition to this agenda and the understanding of the world which underpinned it...these voices received relatively little attention...and seemed to play a decreasing role in influencing foreign policy” (Lockman, 248). Smith goes on to analyze what occurred in the post-9/11 climate: “critical (and even moderate) voices were largely drowned out by the right, who quickly and effectively moved to implement its global agenda by exploiting public outrage against the Islamist extremists who perpetrated the September 11th attacks” (Lockman, 249). The right then is an agent of orientalism for its manipulation of the public. Lockman goes on to say that these same policy makers were then successful in convincing the American public of the reasons behind the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. This just shows the extent to which orientalist theory was still prevalent in the world in the fact that “conservative scholars like Bernard Lewis played a significant part, graphically illustrating their continuing, even enhanced, clout in right-wing policymakers circles....as well as the durability and power of some very old Orientalist notions many had mistakenly thought dead as a doornail” (Lockman, 249).

Another source of anti-Islamic sentiment comes in the form of prominent opinion formation in the American media. “Pat Robertson, the founder of the Christian Coalition described the prophet Muhammad as an “absolute wild-eyed fanatic....a robber....a brigand....a killer” (Nimer, 85). This commentary by Pat Robertson is meant to portray Islam as the “other” by slanderous the most important leader of the faith by calling him a fanatic and criminal. Robertson also goes on to suggest that Islam lacks the morals of the Christian faith, all in an attempt to show Islam is a false religion, and thus inferior to Christianity. This also ties into the issue regarding religion, for Pat Robertson also said that Islam was a “satanic religion” (Taras, 61). Interestingly, Nimer also cites Bernard Lewis, author of “Islam and the West, prominent Princeton scholar whose controversial theories and work have been at the center of the debate concerning Islam, and Sam Huntington, a prominent Harvard political science professor whose theory on clashing civilizations became a point of major discussion regarding Islam.

Nimer refers to these two writers/intellectuals as leaders in the “anti-Islamic discourse in the U.S. known as the ‘Islam as a problem’ discourse” (Nimer, 86). This discourse is meant to suggest that Islam poses a problem to modern Western society, “its proponents say that Islam is an obstacle to democracy, uncomfortable with or incapable of being modern, oppresses women, and encourages violence and terrorism (e.g, jihad, and martyrdom)” (Nimer, 86). Essentially this view of Islam as a problem portrays Islam as a roadblock to democracy, peace, and modernization within the region, and thus this view helps to promote anti-Arab sentiment in the West. All of these descriptions of Islam portray it in a very negative light as compared to Christianity, suggesting that Islam does not share the same religious and cultural values as the West.

Governance

The media also played a role in the rallying of public support for the various U.S excursions into the Middle East. Regarding the role of media in the Persian Gulf War, Yahaya Kamalipour argues that “public support for the American offensive in the Persian Gulf was promoted by media employment of culturally acceptable anti-Arab images” (Kamalipour, 120). One such example is seen in a cartoon by Herbert Block titled “Musketterrorists” in which Saddam, along with Qaddafi and Arafat, two other prominent regional leaders, are seen “holding sabers high in the sky in a symbolic gesture of solidarity” (Kamalipour, 147). This image is meant to show the unity of these terrorist leaders who support Saddam's aggressive military action in Kuwait, and is meant to cause Americans to feel outrage at their actions. These leaders are prominent opposition leaders to the policy goals of America and their regional allies, and by suggesting their solidarity against the West, the image is meant to cause a sense of moral outrage in the public, and to help gain public support for preventing the further spread of their influence in the region. Another anti-Islamic image is seen in the *Los Angeles*

Times in the cartoon depicting “The Sheiks of Araby: An Arab Peace meeting which showed robed Arab leaders gathered around a conference table, each wearing a gas mask” (Kamalipour, 147). This depiction of the Arabs is meant to emphasize the stereotype that all Arabs wear robes, and the gas masks are representative of the biological warfare being employed in the warring between Arab nations. This depiction of the Arabs is also meant to suggest that Arabs cannot be civilized in a meeting together, unlike many of the Western, civilized nations. In regards to promoting a diplomatic solution, the media ruled this out by portraying the Iraqis in a negative light. “Media vilification of Iraq was so extreme that it ruled out in advance diplomatic solutions and reduced Iraqi diplomatic solutions to propaganda and deception” (Kamalipour, 121). The media thus again shows itself to be a modern agent of orientalism, for in employing anti-Arab imagery in its use of cartoons, and by vilifying the Arabs and their leaders, the media constructed an enemy and rallied the public to denounce this enemy.

In terms of the orientalist portrayals of the Iraqis, “the American audience was treated to a handful of verbal and visual images that portrayed Iraqis-Saddam Hussein in particular-as uncivilized, untrustworthy, irrational, and dangerous” (Kamalipour, 121). Other pro-intervention images which emphasize this idea are seen in the *Washington Post* op-ed (August, 1990) in which “Mike Lukovich depicted Hussein holding a knife to the throat of a robe-clad Kuwaiti Arab. Other cartoonists depicted Hussein as a variety of demonized creatures, particularly a fanged spider of enormous size by Marlette” (Kamalipour, 147). The portrayal of Saddam in American cartoons went so far as to refer to him as a “uncivilized, irrational barbarian” (Kamalipour, 126). This is a very interesting example of the classical ideas and methods utilized by Hippocrates, Herodotus and Aristotle regarding orientalism, as seen in the modern era. All three of these authors used the term barbarian when referring to the “other” as anyone who was deemed uncivilized and non-Greeks. In this modern example, the media used the term barbarian to refer to Saddam Hussein and his people, setting up the modern idea of the “other” in the form of the Arab, rather than the ancient element on non-Greekness.. This depiction of Saddam Hussein

as a modern barbarian does however fit into the framework of classical orientalism in one sense, for it retains the same concept of being uncivilized. Regarding the weakness of the Middle East, the media also had cartoon images of other Arabs which made them look “weak, self-centered, and incapable of diplomacy” (Kamalipour, 121). This idea of the “other” being weak also goes back to the classical Greek era in which being weak was a sign of being inferior as well as of being non-Greek. Similarly, by providing images of the Arabs which suggested their weakness, the media was orientalizing the Arabs to be the weak “other” to the “strong” America. Nimer also goes on to expose other stereotypes which are prevalent in the U.S. due to ignorance and media propaganda. “Many(Americans) think all Muslims are Arabs.....that Islam is inherently intolerant religion...that Islam is more violent than Christianity” (Nimer, 61). Similarly, it is interesting to note that the same level of ignorance is seen in the fact that many people in the West assume that all Arabs are Muslims, when in reality there are major distinctions within Islam (Shia and Sunni) and various other non-Muslim religious groups present within the Middle East. These examples show the extent to which the mass media as its own entity “cannot be underestimated in terms of their power of perpetuating ethnic and racial bias” (Kamalipour, 139). Racial bias can be seen as a mean of orientalizing the Arab, Islamic Middle East, for through racial bias, the media is able to depict the Arab as separate, and barbarian, which is a distinct “other” to the West. These cartoons are thus an agent in orientalizing the Arabs (in this case the Iraqis), as a foreign foe, who are weak, oppressive, and barbaric in comparison to the West.

It is interesting to note the relationship between the ideas of freedom and tyranny that were discussed in classical Greece also have a place in the modern-day orientalist picture. As Nimer states, under George W. Bush, the two primary goals were the advance of democracy and freedom throughout the world and also American military superiority for the purpose of being dominant (Nimer, 24). In the case of the freedom aspect of Bush foreign policy, freedom was defined as the freedom from dictators, but also the promotion of pro-American democracies. In the case of classical Greece, freedom was

related to the Greeks' sovereignty over themselves, whereas in the modern-day, America is already free and is actually attempting to free the Middle East from the rule of dictators. The modern-day case is far less black and white, however, for there are many other reasons which have been given for U.S. involvement in the Middle East, primarily the potential material gain from oil exports.

In regards to the idea of the U.S being militarily superior and dominant, this also seems to have a connection to the classical Greek idea that the Greeks were superior and dominant over the Persians and East. In the modern-day case, this idea is supported by the large U.S military presence in the Middle East region. It seems this view that some in the West have is in line with Edward Said's work which discusses the idea that "the West has dominated the Islamic world, leading to the popular notion that the Orient, including the Islamic world, is inferior to the West" (Kamalipour, 2003). The concept of Western cultural dominance over Islam reinforces the orientalism of the Arab world at large, depicting it as inferior to the West.

Concerning religion, one of the major reasons given for anti-Islamic sentiment is that religion and government are not separate entities in Islam, and "leaders who are Islamists will impose Shari'ah law on the people" (Nimer, 38). To a degree Shari'ah law is adopted in some Middle Eastern countries, but much of what is said about Shari'ah law is the Western perception of these laws. Also when discussing these laws Nimer suggests that formal adherence to Shari'ah law may not be what the people want, but rather what their leaders want. Nevertheless, this description of Islam regarding the role of religion in government is meant to be in sharp contrast with the mostly secular governments of Europe, thereby helping to reinforce the image of Islam as the "other."

Cultural Values

Islamophobia is also depicted in the the way in which cultural differences are portrayed, as in

the case of religion which has been portrayed as a source of unresolvable difference between the West and the Middle East. In Brenda Shaffer's book, *The Limits of Culture: Islam and Foreign Policy*, culture is defined as “the force or group of forces which determines a predominant self-identity of a specific and sizable collective of people” (Shaffer, 2). As Samuel Huntington, a Harvard political science professor, explained it in his article *Clash of Civilizations*, “the most important conflicts of the future will occur among the cultural fault lines separating these civilizations from one another.....for a civilization is a cultural entity” (Shaffer, 10). By discussing civilizations in this way, the civilization with which the West clashes can be viewed as the “other.” Nimer specifically references Sam Huntington's theory about the “impending clash between Islam and the West” as one of the causes and the use of the term Islamophobia (Nimer, 15). Shaffer goes on to say that Huntington's work has had major influence “on the way policymakers and journalists view the politics and conflicts in Muslim populated states” (Shaffer, 9). The fact that these scholars have had major influence in the forming of policy can be related back to their use of culture as a means of shaping the public image of Islam. “Culture can be a means of foreign policy by serving as a pretext that aims at domestic or foreign support” (Shaffer, 27). As mentioned above, this is clearly what was done in the U.S in the case of the conservative right which throughout various media and political measures were successful in convincing the American people of the cause for war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Thus, by citing cultural differences between Islam and the West, specifically America, the pro-war conservative right-wing was able to orientalize Islam and promote their ideas domestically.

Regarding the cultural image of the Middle East prior to September 11th, 2001, it is interesting to note how the image of Saudi Arabia (as a case study of the region) changed in the view of the “American Mind” (Shaffer, 164). “The Saudi Arabian monarchy has always adhered to Wahhabi faith [an interpretation of Islam], but prior to September 11th, 2001, Saudi Arabia was viewed as oil rich and was not associated with Islam” (Shaffer, 113). After 9/11, “Saudi Arabia has come to be associated

prominently with Islam - an extremist, threatening Islam, supportive of terrorism” (Shaffer, 113). Thus a clear shift in the image of Saudi Arabia through the lens of the U.S can be shown, with a direct connection to changes in diplomatic relations between the two countries. “Only after September 11th, when signs began to emerge that the security alliance between the United States and Saudi Arabia was crumbling, did the image of Saudi Arabians as being fundamentally culturally different from the Americans emerge” (Shaffer, 20). After 9/11, the political rhetoric changed to depict Saudi Arabia in an oriental way. “Since the September 11th attacks, the image of Saudi Arabia that has been reflected by the U.S press has been transformed from that of a wealthy and modernizing, if not quite democratic, major oil exporter which happened to be the birthplace of some Islamic terrorists, into a Wahhabist, fundamentalist Islamic kingdom whose principal export is terrorism and who is not a reliable ally of the United States” (Shaffer, 113-114). Again this change in imagery shows the promotion of Islamophobia, for this depiction of the Saudis being fundamentally different from the Americans was yet another way in which the Middle East (in this case Saudi Arabia) was viewed as the distinct other due to its cultural differences.

One of the ways in which orientalism has evolved and become more subtle is in its effect on immigration, and the view of Islam as foreign. The U.S is not the only group which is struggling with the issues surrounding Islam and orientalism, for Europe is also dealing with these issues as well. One of the primary issues in Europe deals with the migration of those who are not ethnically European into Western Europe. In the last decade there has been a large movement against foreigners migrating into Europe with the “concern that the increasing power and visibility of ethnic minorities and the accompanying social problems which growing migration is producing, has raised concern over what has been described as ‘cultural pollution,’ ‘overforeignisation’ or ‘minorisation’” (Taras, 31). This movement against the migration of foreigners into Europe can be seen in the lens of orientalism for it is meant to distinguish those who are ethnically European from those who are not. The recurring theme of

the “other” is also seen in the case of the foreign migrant or stranger from whom we, “seeking retribution for our injuries and setbacks, we quarrel with them, enter into conflicts, conduct wars” (Taras, 71). In Europe it is a similar us versus them mentality that is present in regards to Muslims: “it is tied to a sense of identity, who is like us and who is not. It may well be that the perceived differences leads ultimately to differential and even discriminatory treatment of Muslims” (Taras, 80). Thus the issue of immigration can be seen in the light of the promotion or retention of Western sociocultural values, thus orientalizing Islam as being culturally different and disconnected from modern European culture.

It is interesting to note that the effect that right-wing groups in Europe have in the treatment of Muslims is similar to that seen in the U.S. “Fear of Muslim presence in Europe has become an issue that right-wing populist groups have dramatized. Muslims are increasingly represented...as members of a precarious transnational society, in which people only want to stone women, cut throats, be suicide bombers, beat their wives, and commit honor crimes” (Taras, 84). This view of Muslims is meant to show that Muslim values and culture are in stark contrast with the values and culture of Europe and this distinction helps to further the orientalism which is present in European politics.

Regarding government and its role in orientalism, within the EU these ideas have been espoused by anti-immigrant parties who have “emphasized the urgency of defending national culture and traditions, in this way seeking to raise an emotional backlash against foreigners” (Taras, 95). Thus this is a modern example of the use of national identity as a means of distinguishing the Western nations from the Middle East.

A recent example of this issue of national identity and culture is seen in the legal issues surrounding Muslim outerwear in France. “The public symbols of Islamism have become more visible, from the headscarf to the burqa, from minarets to Arabic signage. Not surprisingly these religious symbols have been targeted in legal initiatives seeking to ban or limit their visibility” (Taras, 119). In

the midst of these debates on immigration, French President Nicholas Sarkozy proposed a new topic for debate, national identity. “The president hoped that it would lead to a consensus on what it meant to be French, but instead it became a platform to express fears and hostility towards immigrants and, specifically, Muslims” (Taras, 157). This issue with foreigners also concerned the schism between the secular center of France and the rapidly growing Muslim minority. Sarkozy “emphasized the need for public policy to deal with overt displays of Islamic faith, such as the wearing of veils and recitation of prayers on streets, which he suggested weakened secular identity [of France]” (Taras, 158). The issue with the religious clothing and symbols shows the clash between Middle Eastern religion and culture, which allows for the public display of this religious wear, and the largely secular European culture which shuns public religious depictions. Veiling of women is clear method by which Muslims can distinguish themselves from non-Muslims for it is a physical method by which one display her faith. It seems that modern European society does not want to see this physical presence of Muslims for it emphasizes their lack of secularism and integration into European society. The issue of the veils also is a reminder to the non-Muslim majority of Europe that the number of Muslims immigrating to Europe is rapidly increasing. Politically speaking, by creating this issue, the president and members of his right-wing coalition are trying to create a clear line of distinction between the culture of secular Europe and the culture of the “other,” the Islamic Middle East. Similar to the U.S., where war-mongering was prevalent during the election period, Sarkozy's movement was used to help win votes during election time. “Sarkozy's Grenoble speech together with the UMP charter on secularism suggest that policies anti-Muslim in design are regarded as the surest way to maximize electoral support” (Taras, 158). The issue of public displays of religion has been used to distinguish the West (in this case Europe) and the Middle East. The main idea is that Europe is culturally and religiously held to be a secular place, and this influx of foreigners has brought their non-secular Islamic traditions with them, causing tension. The various policymakers, political groups, and government officials thus use the issue of religion as a

means of orientalizing Arab Muslim religion and culture as being radically different from that of Europe's society.

When analyzing the concept of orientalism and its effect on the Arab Middle East, it is important to note that it was not the only theory being applied to the analysis of the region. The other major theory aside from Orientalism was modernization. Daniel Lerner “saw modernization as a universal process initiated by the West: From the West came the stimuli which undermined traditional society in the Middle East” (Lockman, 137). Regarding orientalism and modernization, “both theories can be seen as premised upon drawing the sharp distinctions between ‘us’ (Westerners living as modern people in modern societies) and ‘them’ (non-Westerners, especially Muslims, traditional people living in tradition-bound societies) even if the adherents of modernization theory focused on the process whereby ‘they’ would or at least could become like us” (Lockman, 139). It is also interesting to note that similar to the classical Greek authors, modern American (as mentioned previously) and European authors also believe that Islam and its adherents cannot be reconciled with the West. As Matti Bunzl put it, at the heart of the Islamophobia discussion is the “notion that Islam engenders a world view that is fundamental incompatible with and inferior to Western culture” (Taras, 117).

Conclusion

In the classical period, the Greek authors discussed the “other” as a distinct entity due to a fundamental difference in geography. Regarding the classical texts, “In the writings of philosophers, geographers and historians, and in the work of playwrights and poets, the Greeks often contrasted themselves with the Asians in rather stark and essentialist terms—that is in terms that framed the differences between Greek and Asians as fundamental, as stemming from their entirely different natures” (Lockman, 13). The modern-day time period, however, showed the evolution of orientalism in

its depictions in media, and the “other” was discussed as different due to religion. This religious difference was discussed in regards to issues of Islamophobia, government, and cultural values. The main examples given deal with the use of various mass media to promote certain orientalist propaganda, i.e. cartoons to increase public support of Desert Storm, etc. In the modern-day time period the evolution of orientalism was not just seen in the method of communication, but rather through the creation of modern issues such as immigration, social values, and terrorism. The key distinction between classical and modern orientalism is the fact that in classical orientalism, all of the arguments listed dealt with geography as the primary distinction, whereas in the modern time period the primary difference is religion. Religion is a much more expansive topic than geography and there are far more dimensions of analysis in religion. Thus we see the evolution of orientalism from regional orientalism based on geography to a more ideological, religious depiction of orientalism. Orientalism has evolved from its classical Greek vs. East depiction to be a West vs. Middle East depiction, and with this change has come an evolution of the issues surrounding the debate, with religion being the major point of distinction.

The main way in which these issues of modern-day Islamophobia can be overcome is the dispelling of ignorance. The Middle East can no longer be viewed as one single entity, for there are various cultural, religious, and governmental groups which comprise the modern-day Middle East. The only way to move beyond this issue is to more fully recognize and understand all of the different groups within the Middle East. In the classical era the world was much smaller and was defined in the context of the Greeks and the East. In the modern-day time period, due to globalization, the world is a much larger place than it was in the classical era. The 21st century sees a world defined in larger terms than any other period in history, with far more cultures, regions, religions, and forms of government. The only way to comprehend these various groups is to open up different forms of dialogue. By emphasizing the commonalities shared between different groups rather than the differences, various

groups can truly begin to understand just how similar “the other” is to themselves.

Works Cited

- Bakker, Egbert J., and Hans Van. Wees. *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*. Leiden: Brill, 2002. Print.
- Barrett, Frank A. *Disease & Geography: The History of an Idea*. Toronto: Geographical Monographs, 2000. Print.
- Bartlett, Robert C., and Susan D. Collins. *Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle*. Albany: State University of New York, 1999. Print.
- Bernstein, Matthew, and Gaylyn Studlar, eds. *Visions of the East: Orientalism in Film*. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1997. Print.
- Ginneken, Jaap Van. *Screening Difference: How Hollywood's Blockbuster Films Imagine Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007. Print.
- Goodman, Lenn Evan, and Robert B. Talisse. *Aristotle's Politics Today*. Albany: State University of New York, 2007. Print.
- Graf, Arndt, Schirin Fathi, and Paul Ludwig. *Orientalism and Conspiracy: Politics and Conspiracy Theory in the Islamic World*. London: I.B.Tauris, 2011. Print.
- Herodotus, Sélincourt Aubrey De, and A. R. Burn. *The Histories*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972. Print.
- Herodotus, Sélincourt Aubrey De, and John Marincola. *The Histories*. London: Penguin, 2003. Print.
- Jung, Dietrich. *Orientalists, Islamists and the Global Public Sphere: A Genealogy of the Modern Essentialist Image of Islam*. Sheffield, UK: Equinox Pub., 2011. Print.
- Kalimtzis, Kostas. *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease: An Inquiry into Stasis*. Albany: State University of New York, 2000. Print.

- Kamalipour, Yahya R., ed. *The U.S. Media And the Middle East: Image and Perception*. London: Greenwood, 1995. Print.
- Labib, Tahar, ed. *Imagining the Arab Other: How Arabs and Non-Arabs View Each Other*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2008. Print.
- Lewis, Bernard. *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror*. New York: Modern Library, 2003. Print.
- Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott. *A Lexicon Abridged from Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1987. Print.
- Lockman, Zachary. *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004. Print.
- Macfie, A. L. *Orientalism*. London: Longman, 2002. Print.
- Mann, W.N. *Hippocratic Writings*. Trans. J. Chadwick. Ed. G.E.R. Lloyd. London: Penguin Group, 1983. Print.
- Nimer, Mohamed. *Islamophobia and Anti-Americanism: Causes and Remedies*. Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 2007. Print.
- Norden, Martin F., ed. *The Changing Face of Evil in Film and Television*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007. Print.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979. Print.
- Shaffer, Brenda. *The Limits of Culture: Islam and Foreign Policy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2006. Print.
- Taras, Ray. *Xenophobia and Islamophobia in Europe*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2012. Print.